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Planning Statement & Design and Access Statement

414 Gosbrook Road
Caversham
RG4 8EG

Our ref: PL.11926

Change of Use of detached outbuilding part of 414 Gosbrook Road, to vehicle sales (Sui Generis)

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement (incorporating DAS) accompanies an application for the change of use of an existing detached outbuilding at 414 Gosbrook Road, Caversham, Reading inn to a small-scale vehicle sales use (Sui Generis).

2. Site and proposal

The application site is approximately 200 m² (including an existing single-storey detached outbuilding of approximately 26 m²). The area is already physically enclosed by existing boundary fencing and gates.

The proposed vehicle sales operation would be small in scale and would comprise of the following:

- a maximum of approximately seven vehicles for sale on the site at any one time;
- one employee on site (during booked appointments only);
- customer visits by appointment only, currently averaging approximately three appointments per week;
- only one customer appointment at any one time;
- customer parking accommodated within the application site;
- opening hours of 10:00–18:00 Monday to Friday and 10:00–16:00 Saturday and Sunday; and
- no servicing, repairs, MOT testing, valeting, washing, bodywork or other works to vehicles.
- No vehicle transporter deliveries would take place.

The site is located at the rear of no. 414 Gosbrook Road and has a permeable surface with gravel across the site.

The use would operate wholly during daytime hours. There would be no vehicle repairs, servicing, valeting or other activities capable of generating the noise and disturbance normally associated with a garage, workshop or conventional vehicle dealership.

The limited operating hours, low frequency of customer visits, absence of vehicle transporters and existing enclosed nature of the site would ensure that the proposal would not cause material harm to either neighbouring residential occupiers or occupants of the HMO. The proposal is therefore consistent with the objectives relevant policies, which seeks to safeguard residential amenity and specifically requires consideration of noise, disturbance, business operating hours and associated traffic movements.



Figure 2 - Existing site - bird's eye view

3. Access, parking and highway impact

The proposal would generate only a very limited number of additional vehicle movements. There would be one employee, and customer visits would be by prior appointment, with only one customer vehicle attending at any one time.

Customer parking can be accommodated within the application site, and the development would therefore not rely upon on street parking. The site would accommodate a maximum of approximately seven display vehicles together with the operational parking and circulation required for the business.

Reading Borough Council's Parking Standards specifically recognise vehicle sales as a separate parking category and require the maximum number of display vehicles to be identified while retaining adequate parking and circulation. The proposed maximum of seven vehicles provides a clear operational limit for the development.

Given the very low frequency of customer visits, absence of transporter deliveries and availability of on site parking, the proposal would not be expected to result in a material increase in traffic or adversely affect highway safety or the operation of the surrounding road network, consistent with the relevant policies on the Local Plan.

1. Character and appearance

The proposed commercial use would occupy a relatively small and clearly defined area of approximately 200 m². The site is already enclosed by existing fencing and gates, which provides physical and visual separation between the vehicle sales area, the remaining HMO accommodation and surrounding properties.

The limited number of vehicles and contained nature of the site would prevent the operation from developing the appearance or intensity of a conventional vehicle sales forecourt.

Also, the building remains as existing and there are no material changes.

2. Conclusion

The proposal represents a small scale and low intensity vehicle sales operation within an existing enclosed part of the site. It would not result in the loss of any dwelling, HMO bedroom or residential floorspace, would not compromise the parking or amenity requirements of the existing HMO, and would retain adequate residential amenity space.

With a maximum of approximately seven vehicles, one employee, appointment only visits, on site customer parking, restricted daytime operating hours and no vehicle servicing or related activities, the proposal would have a very limited impact upon residential amenity and highways.

Accordingly, the proposed change of use is considered to represent an appropriate and proportionate use of this part of the site.

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